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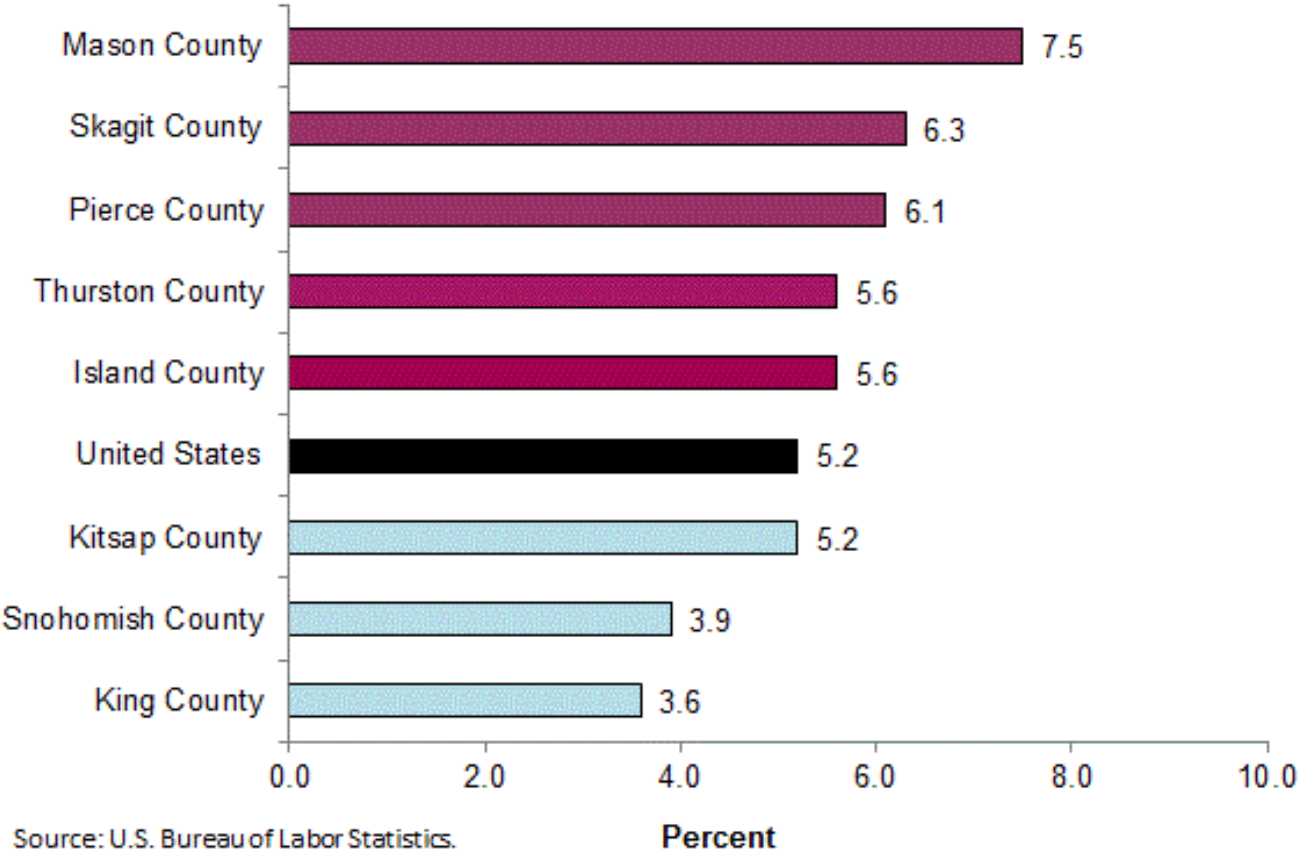
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Unemployment in the Seattle Area by County - August 2015
All Counties Posted Lower Unemployment Rates than in the Previous Year

In August, King County had the lowest unemployment rate, 3.6 percent, in the Seattle-Tacoma-Olympia, Wash. Combined Statistical Area (CSA), one of three counties to have a rate at or below the national average of 5.2 percent, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Richard J. Holden, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that the remaining five counties had jobless rates ranging from 5.6 percent to 7.5 percent. (See chart 1. The Technical Note at the end of this release contains the metropolitan area definition. All data in this release are not seasonally adjusted; accordingly, over-the-year analysis is used throughout.)

Chart 1. Unemployment rates for the United States, and counties in the Seattle-Tacoma-Olympia, Wash. Combined Statistical Area, August 2015, Not Seasonally Adjusted



In August 2015, all eight area counties had over-the-year unemployment rate declines ranging from 1.3 points in Snohomish County to 0.8 percentage point in Skagit County. Nationally, the unemployment rate fell 1.1 percentage points from August a year ago. (See [table A](#)).

Table A. Unemployment rates for the United States, the Seattle-Tacoma-Olympia, Wash. Combined Statistical Area, and its components, not seasonally adjusted

Area	Unemployment rate			Change from	
	Aug 2013	Aug 2014	Aug 2015	Aug 2013 to Aug 2015 ⁽¹⁾	Aug 2014 to Aug 2015 ⁽¹⁾
United States.....	7.3	6.3	5.2	-2.1	-1.1
Seattle-Tacoma-Olympia, Wash. Combined Statistical Area.....	6.1	5.6	4.4	-1.7	-1.2
Island County.....	7.2	6.8	5.6	-1.6	-1.2
King County.....	5.1	4.7	3.6	-1.5	-1.1
Kitsap County.....	6.9	6.3	5.2	-1.7	-1.1
Mason County.....	9.7	8.4	7.5	-2.2	-0.9
Pierce County.....	8.2	7.2	6.1	-2.1	-1.1
Skagit County.....	7.9	7.1	6.3	-1.6	-0.8
Snohomish County.....	5.8	5.2	3.9	-1.9	-1.3
Thurston County.....	7.4	6.6	5.6	-1.8	-1.0

⁽¹⁾ Data for the Seattle-Tacoma-Olympia, Wash. Combined Statistical Area and its components are preliminary for the most recent month.

All eight Seattle area counties also experienced unemployment rate decreases over the two-year period from August 2013 to August 2015. Mason County (-2.2 percentage points) had the largest decline, while King County (-1.5 points) had the lowest. Pierce County had a rate decline that was equal to the nationwide decrease of 2.1 percentage points. The remaining five counties had unemployment rate declines ranging from -1.6 points to -1.9 percentage points from August 2013. Mason County had the highest unemployment rate while King County had the lowest unemployment rate in August for each of the last three years.

Technical Note

This release presents unemployment rate data for states and counties from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program, a federal-state cooperative endeavor.

Definitions. The labor force and unemployment data are based on the same concepts and definitions as those used for the official national estimates obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a sample survey of households that is conducted for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by the U.S. Census Bureau. The LAUS program measures employment and unemployment on a place-of-residence basis. The universe for each is the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and over. Employed persons are those who did any work at all for pay or profit in the reference week (the week including the 12th of the month) or worked 15 hours or more without pay in a family business or farm, plus those not working who had a job from which they were temporarily absent, whether or not paid, for such reasons as labor-management dispute, illness, or vacation. Unemployed persons are those who were not employed during the reference week (based on the definition above), had actively looked for a job sometime in the 4-week period ending with the reference week, and were currently available for work; persons on layoff expecting recall need not be looking for work to be counted as unemployed. The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons. The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed as a percent of the labor force.

Method of estimation. The LAUS program is a hierarchy of non-survey methodologies for indirectly estimating employment and unemployment in the states and local areas. Statewide data are produced through a modeling technique that uses estimates of payroll jobs from the Current Employment Statistics survey and unemployment insurance claims counts from the state workforce agencies to mitigate volatility in the direct CPS tabulations of employment and unemployment, respectively. Data for labor market areas, such as metropolitan areas and metropolitan divisions, are produced through a building block approach and adjusted proportionally to state model-based totals. Data for counties within labor market areas are produced through a disaggregation technique. A detailed description of the LAUS estimation procedures is available in chapter 4 of the BLS handbook of methods at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch4.htm.

Annual revisions. Labor force and unemployment data for prior years reflect adjustments made at the end of each year, usually implemented with January estimates. The adjusted estimates reflect updated population data from the U.S. Census Bureau, any revisions in the other data sources, and model reestimation. All substate estimates are reestimated and adjusted to add the revised model-based estimates.

Area definitions. The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, dated February 28, 2013. A detailed list of the geographic definitions is available at <http://www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm>.

The **Seattle-Tacoma-Olympia, Wash. Combined Statistical Area** includes Island, King, Kitsap, Mason, Pierce, Skagit, Snohomish, and Thurston Counties in Washington.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; TDD message referral phone: 1-800-877-8339.